Russian Briefing

The Battle of Friedland
14th June, 1807
“Sometimes a single battle decides everything and sometimes, too, the slightest circumstance decides the issue of a battle. There is a moment in every battle at which the least manoeuvre is decisive and gives superiority, as one drop of water causes overflow.”

- Napoléon Bonaparte
**Historical Background:**

During 1805 Europe had become embroiled in the War of the Third Coalition. Following the French victory at the Battle of Austerlitz in December 1805, Prussia went to war in 1806 to recover her position as the leading power of Central Europe.

**The Prussian Campaign:**

Franco-Prussian tensions gradually increased after Austerlitz. Napoleon insisted that Prussia should join his economic blockade of Great Britain. This adversely affected the German merchant class. Napoleon ordered a raid to seize a subversive, anti-Napoleonic bookseller named Johann Philipp Palm in August 1806, and made a final attempt to secure terms with Britain by offering her Hanover, which infuriated Prussia. The Prussians began to mobilise on August 9th, 1806, and issued an ultimatum on August 26th: they required French troops to withdraw to the west bank of the Rhine by October 8th on pain of war between the two nations.
Napoleon aimed to win the war by destroying the Prussian armies before the Russians could arrive. 180,000 French troops began to cross the Franconian forest on October 2nd, 1806, deployed in a bataillon-carré system designed to meet threats from any possible direction. On October 14th the French won decisively at the large double-battle of Jena-Auerstedt. A famous pursuit followed, and by the end of the campaign the Prussians had lost 25,000 killed and wounded, 140,000 prisoners, and more than 2,000 cannon. A few Prussian units managed to cross the Oder River into Poland, but Prussia lost the vast majority of its army. Russia now had to face France alone. By November 18th French forces under Louis Nicolas Davout had covered half the distance to Warsaw, Augereau's men had neared Bromberg, and Jérôme Bonaparte's troops had reached the approaches of Kalisz.

**Battle of Eylau:**

When the French arrived in Poland, the local people hailed them as liberators. The Russian general Bennigsen worried that French forces might cut him off from Buxhowden's army, so he abandoned Warsaw and retreated to the right bank of the Vistula. On November 28th, 1806, French troops under Murat entered Warsaw. The French pursued the fleeing Russians and a significant battle developed around Pułtusk on December 26th. The result remained in doubt, but Bennigsen wrote to the Tsar that he had defeated 60,000 French troops, and as a result he gained overall command of the Russian armies in Poland. At this point, Marshal Ney began to extend his forces to procure food supplies. Bennigsen noticed a good opportunity to strike at an isolated French corps, but he abandoned his plans once he realised Napoléon's manoeuvres intended to trap his army. The Russians withdrew towards Allenstein, and later to Eylau.
On February 7th the Russians fought Soult's corps for possession of Eylau. Daybreak on February 8th saw 44,500 French troops on the field against 67,000 Russians, but after receiving reinforcements the French had 75,000 men against 76,000. Napoleon hoped to pin Bennigsen's army long enough to allow Ney's and Davout's troops to outflank the Russians. A fierce struggle ensued, made worse by a blinding snowstorm on the battlefield. The French found themselves in dire straits until a massed cavalry charge, made by 10,700 troopers formed in 80 squadrons, relieved the pressure on the center. Davout's arrival meant the attack on the Russian left could commence, but the assault was blunted when a Prussian force under Lestoq suddenly appeared on the battlefield and, with Russian help, threw the French back. Ney came too late to effect any meaningful decision, so Bennigsen retreated. Casualties at this indecisive battle were horrific, perhaps 25,000 on each side. More importantly, however, the lack of a decisive victory by either side meant that the war would go on.

Battle of Heilsberg:

After several months of recuperating from Eylau, Napoleon ordered the Grande Armée on the move once again. Learning that the Russians had encamped at their operational base in the town of Heilsberg, by the Alle River, Napoleon decided to conduct a general assault in the hopes of dislodging what he thought was the rearguard of the Russian army. In fact, the French ran into the entire Russian army of over 50,000 men and 150 artillery guns. Repeated and determined attacks by the French failed to dislocate the Russians, who were fighting inside elaborate earthworks designed to prevent precisely the kind of river crossing Napoleon was attempting. French casualties soared to 10,000 while the Russians lost about 6,000. The Russians eventually withdrew from Heilsberg as their position became untenable, prompting Napoleon to chase after them once again. On June 13th, the advance guard of Marshal Lannes reported seeing large numbers of Russian troops at the town of Friedland. Both sides engaged one another for the remainder of the day with no result. Crucially, Bennigsen believed he had enough time to cross the Alle the following day, to destroy the isolated units of Lannes, and to withdraw back across the river without ever encountering the main French army.
BATTLE OF FRIEDLAND
14 June 1807

Cavalry
Infantry
Artillery
French
Russians

SCALE

Legend:

- Blue: French
- Green: Russians
- Red: Artillery
- Black: Infantry

Map of the Battle of Friedland on 14 June 1807.
Order of Battle

Commander-in-Chief: General der Kavallerie, Baron Levin August Gottlieb Theophil von Bennigsen

1st Division: GL Mallutin
- 1st Brigade - Deperadovich
- 2nd (Guard) Brigade - Bachoutzki

14th Division: General Somorov
- 1st Brigade - Alexciév
- 2nd Brigade - Gersdorf

Guard Cavalry: General Kollogivov
- Gardes à Cheval Regiment
- Chevalier Guard Regiment
- Guard Hussar Regiment
- Guard Uhlan Regiment
Order of Battle

**Left Wing:** GL Prince Pyotr Bagration

**Advance Guard:** GL Bagration

- Left Wing - Raevsky
- Right Wing - Baggowouth
- Support Group - Markov

**2nd Division:** GL Count Osterman

- 1st Brigade - Mazovski
- 2nd Brigade - Sukin

**Cavalry:** GL Kologribov

- Light Cavalry Brigade - Kologribov
- Cuirassier Brigade - Kogine
Order of Battle

**Right Wing:** GL Prince Aleksey Ivanovich Gorchakov

**3rd Division:** GM Titov II
- 1st Brigade - Uschakov
- 2nd Brigade - Titov II
- 3rd Brigade - von Netting

**6th Division:** General Lovov
- 1st Brigade - Rachmaninov
- 2nd Brigade - Bykov

**Cavalry:** GdD Uvarov
- Hussar Brigade - Uvarov
- Uhlan Brigade - Lourkovski
Order of Battle

Centre: GL Dmitry Sergeyevich Dokhturov

7th Division: GL Essen III
- 1st Brigade - Zaposki
- 2nd Brigade - ?

8th Division: GM Engelhard
- 1st Brigade - Engelhard

Cavalry: GL Prince Galitzin
- Hussar Brigade - Dorochow
- Hussar Brigade - Lambert
- Dragoon Brigade - Korff
Friedland is a small town (the area on the map is 2 x 1BW in size and can be garrisoned).

Heinrichsdorf is a large village of relatively open built up area (approx 4 x 2 BW in size and cannot be garrisoned - treat as woodland for game purposes).

Sortlack is a village (1BW in size and can be garrisoned).

The Alle river cannot be crossed (the crossing points at Friedland are just off map).

The Mühlen Flüß (Mill Stream) is fordable (difficult movement) except at the pond which cannot be crossed.
Russian Dispositions

No. 1: Advance Guard with Bagration attached (Left Wing)
   ✦ Set up as indicated North-East of the Sortlack Woods.

No. 2: Kologribov - Cavalry - (Left Wing)
   ✦ Set up as indicated on the high ground West of the loop in the River Alle.

No. 3: Osterman - 2nd Division (Left Wing)
   ✦ Set up as indicated straddling the Posthenen - Friedland Road.

No. 4: Titov II - 3rd Division (Right Wing)
   ✦ Set up as indicated on the high ground, South of the Heinrichsdorf - Friedland Road

No. 5: Lovov - 3rd Division (Right Wing)
   ✦ Set up as indicated on the high ground, North of the Heinrichsdorf - Friedland Road
Russian Dispositions

No. 6: Essen III - 7th Division (Centre)

- Set up as indicated on the high ground, straddling the Heinrichsdorf - Friedland Road - approx 2BW behind the 3rd Division

No. 7: Lovov - 8th Division (Centre)

- Set up as indicated on the high ground straddling the Heinrichsdorf - Friedland Road - approx 2BW behind the 6th Division

No. 8: Uvarov - Cavalry (Right Wing)

- Set up as indicated West of the Damerau Wood

No. 9: Galitzin - Cavalry (Centre)

- Set up as indicated North of the Heinrichsdorf - Friedland Road - approx 2BW behind the 7th Division

Reserves: The following forces are available for deployment as reinforcements, at any time, on the map edge in either of the 2x location 10’s noted on the map:

- 1st Division, 14th Division & the Guard Cavalry
Scenario Notes

Russian Special Rules:

No. 1: Sub-commanders can only attach to units of their respective Corps.

No. 2: All Russian units can use the “rally” rule (pg. 87)

Victory Conditions:

Russian: The Russians win by breaking the French morale or by holding Friedland at the end of turn 37.

French: The French win by breaking the Russian morale or by capturing Friedland before the end of turn 37.

Other Info:

Momentum: 5 dice per side.

Game turns: The game lasts 37 turns. The game starts at 08:00 (turn 1) and ends at 20:00 (turn 37). One turn is about 20mins.